

tions in certain journals are accepted." Williams feels this infringes on academic freedom.

"Social workers can write in journals of a specified field of social work, such as aging or child welfare, or alternatively in a 'publication of dissent'. Well, those dissenting journals just don't count the same. That has the effect of narrowing social work itself." Tenured positions are increasingly difficult to obtain. "There's a whole class of people in North America you could call 'itinerant scholars', running around, teaching courses at reduced rates," says Williams. "There are two reasons for this: the universities want work done cheap, and there is a pool of people who can't get on full-time."

He says that there is no discernible trend toward part-timers at Dalhousie, partly because it is a graduate-level institution. But at institutions that do hire part timers, Williams says these instructors often have to take on a heavy teaching load to make ends meet, leaving them not enough time for research or publication and denying them the opportunity for advancement. Continuing attrition could lead to an aging, static full-time professoriate and discourage those interested in university teaching.

"The fact is, we're lost people to better working conditions, better salaries. It's no longer how bad things would be, we're already experiencing the loss," says Williams.

All of this adds up to a pretty gloomy picture. The money needed to revive the system isn't there just for the asking. The availability of funds for education depends, as always, on the performance of the economy. And the economy is now a global one, in which the idea of the 'ivory tower' just doesn't wash.

**I**n today's world-wide market, what counts is high-tech, and just as important, who's got it first. In the 'information age', application of knowledge has become the source of competitive advantage.

Consequently, universities have been thrust into an unexpected role: sources of 'intellectual capital'. As James McNiven notes, the university is going to be different or it isn't going to be here.

"Economic changes in the past fifteen years have forced governments to change. It isn't a matter of choice, it's a global economy and we have to compete. People's lives and political structures have just been wrenched. We're in the middle of it, we don't want it. It isn't the revolution we were looking for."

So universities have to get used to some uncomfortable facts. They not only have to make difficult decisions in order to cut costs, they must also realize that if funding is to increase, they must be willing to satisfy the people who provide the funds.

"If we are not responsive, we've got to be willing not to have any money," says McNiven.

**S**pecialization is often touted as a promising way to economize. A draft of the Presidential Statement on the Mission of Dalhousie calls for a "different and distinct role for each institution" in the Maritimes, saying "unnecessary duplication cannot be afforded."

Say a prayer for those charged with deciding which programs are redundant.

Another proposal guaranteed to provoke widespread resistance is the abolition of tenure. Last year, Jean de Grandpre, chancellor of McGill and chairman of Bell Canada Enterprises, told a meeting of the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education: "Tenure is a concept foreign to business in Canada. Corporate managers look with dismay on what they consider the unbusinesslike practice of universities."

Many in the academic community feel that placing universities in a market context has already had adverse effects on education.

Marguerite Cassin, an assistant professor at Dalhousie's School of Public Administration, says that universities are being organized much more in relation to business standards.

"Instead of administrators who return to the professoriate, you have people who view university administration as a career, career managers who are interested in numbers. Their measure of success is comparing their numbers with U of T or Carleton. Their career is managing the university with the resources available, keeping costs down, breaking unions and screwing them around. The result is that there is a huge gap between the point of view of the professors and students and that of the administration."

The emergence of knowledge as a commodity gives rise to a disturbing analogy. John D'Orsay, executive director of NSCUFA, says "there is a tendency to see academic work as similar to controlling any assembly line. So what if they're ideas? They view knowledge as a finite quantity that you can transfer from faculty to students, and the next question is, how do we speed this up?"

**S**tudent's pockets are a perennial favourite with money-hungry administrators. At Dalhousie, an agreement between the Board of Governors and the Student Union has kept fee increases down since the 1985-86 school year. When it expires in 1991, the tug-of-war is likely to resume.

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DSU President Juanita Montalvo says "we are still researching" ways of keeping tuition levels from climbing.

While fee hikes invariably result in charges of decreased accessibility, there is evidence that Canada's relatively low fee levels actually favour higher-income families rather than low-income ones (80 per cent of Dalhousie's students come from families with incomes greater than \$30,000).

A number of economists have concluded that high fees combined with very good financial assistance plans would be both more efficient and more equitable.

Apart from annual fundraising campaigns, there are two other

possible sources of funds: government and the private sector. Both see universities as essential to Canada's economic development. But their ability to solve the funding crisis is problematic.

The federal government, over \$200 billion in debt, is struggling to trim an annual deficit of some \$30 billion. Grants for post-secondary education are being reduced, while any extra funds are being channelled toward

the government of Canada hasn't shown any such foresight.

**U**niversities must take action. A good first step might be to encourage a campus-wide 'survival' debate.

To increase government funding, universities must increase their political clout. There is a wide public perception that they are incapable of making significant contributions to important social and economic problems.

*... a professor's ability to raise funds should be a condition of tenure.*

applied research in the hope of increasing economic competitiveness.

In the same vein, groups such as the Corporate Higher Education Forum — composed of university presidents and Chief Executive Officers of large corporations — are urging more joint ventures between academics and industry.

Technology Transfer offices are sprouting on campuses, including Dalhousie, and government initiatives like the Matching Grants Program and the Centres of Excellence underline the push for high-tech cooperation.

While the idea of a marriage of academe and industry might have been distasteful to many twenty years ago, the concept is now gaining cautious support. While there is wide agreement that certain disciplines could benefit from corporate support, there are strong arguments that a level of private funding sufficient to ease the funding crisis could cause a serious imbalance in university priorities and activities. The trend toward applied research is already adversely affecting support for basic research. Emphasis on disciplines with a potential for profit could relegate the social sciences and humanities to a minor position (some members of the private sector have advocated that a professor's ability to generate funds be a condition of tenure). Universities could hardly remain effective social critics in such a situation.

As well-known scientist/journalist David Suzuki has noted, many academics question the assumption

Universities must show how underfunding hurts the entire society. People should be informed why education is as important as hospitals and the environment, for example, and why it is important to hospitals and the environment.

The negative effect of past underfunding should be acknowledged. Specifically, it should be recognized that financial restraint is threatening faculty morale and thus universities themselves.

As David Williams notes, "when you're out in the cold, the body doesn't cut off circulation to the heart, it cuts off the fingers. University consists of a professor and a student. From then on it's frills."

The possibility of adversarial faculty-administration relations (induced by financial cutbacks) should be eased by more collaborative decision-making.

"Those organizations that prosper are those who pay attention to what the workers have to say. Those who put the rubber to the road are those who know best how the system works. One long-term solution is to have the faculty have greater influence, to have their voice heard more clearly," says Williams.

While recognizing the potential of increased private support for some disciplines the universities should be alert to the risks inherent in such cooperation. A balanced education can be provided only by a balanced university — uneven growth leads to uneven rewards. Academics dependent on special interest groups are not in a position to provide criticism when it is warranted.

A 1984 report entitled "Canadian Universities and Financial Restraint" by Michael Skolnik and Norman Rowan of the Ontario Institution For Studies In Education concluded that the quality of universities had not deteriorated between 1974 and 1982, but that continued restraint would jeopardize the foundation for continued maintenance of quality. Since the economic downturn of the early 1980s, cutbacks have been the order of the day and are scheduled to continue, despite, the 'recovery' of the economy.

The advent of the 'global market' does not bode well for the future economic and intellectual health of universities. Considering its environmental impact, the 'compete more, produce more, consume more' mentality may eventually imperil the planet itself.

By giving in to such a doctrine, universities could be cutting their own wrists. They should be among the first to propose an alternative. And besides, it still doesn't cost anything to think.

